Approved For Release 2007/07/06 : CIA-RDP99-00498R000100020124-5

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29 Sep 76

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(NARCOTICS)

(BY WILLIAM CLAYTON)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- CIA DIRECTOR GEORGE BUSH S[illegible] AGENCY IS "NOT IMPOTENT," BUT WOULD WELCOME CLEARER GUIDELINES ON WHAT IT CAN DO ABOUT DRUG TRAFFICKING.

"THERE IS AN ALMOST TOTAL LACK OF RELIABLE, USEFUL OVERSEAS INTELLIGENCE ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS AND THEIR TRAFFICKING ROUTES," REP. LESTER WOLFF, D-N.Y., TOLD THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY CHIEF.

BUSH TESTIFIED BEFORE THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL AND ABUSE, WHICH WOLFF CHAIRS.

"ONE OF OUR PROBLEMS[illegible] IS THAT WE MUST BE CAREFUL TO AVOID WHAT SOME PEOPLE FELT WERE THE EXCESSES OF THE PAST," SAID BUSH. "WE ARE NOT IN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT BUSINESS."

HE SAID THE CIA'S PRIMARY JOB IN NARCOTICS IS "STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFIC SUCH AS IDENTIFYING MAJOR SOURCE COUNTRIES FOR NARCOTICS AND PREDOMINANT ROUTES FOR TRANSPORTING NARCOTICS."

THE AGENCY CAN TELL THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT EVERY "PIECE OF INTELLIGENCE" IT GETS, BUSH SAID, BUT THE CIA CANNOT GIVE THAT INFORMATION, IF IT RELATES TO AMERICANS, TO THE CABINET-LEVEL COMMITTEE SUPPOSED TO COORDINATE NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORTS.

"WE ARE NOT IMPOTENT," BUSH SAID ON TWO DIFFERENT OCCASIONS, BUT HE ADDED, "WHEN AMERICAN CITIZENS ARE INVOLVED, YOU HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL."

REP. BENJAMIN GILMAN, R-N.Y., SAID CUSTOMS COMMISSIONER VERNON ACREE HAD TESTIFIED THE CIA WAS NOT FURNISHING ENOUGH INFORMATION.

"I HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR HIM," BUSH SAID. "BUT WE DO PROVIDE MORE INTELLIGENCE THAN THAT. BUT THE TYPE OF INTELLIGENCE HE IS LOOKING FOR, TO MAKE A BUST ON SOMEBODY, IS NOT WHAT WE GET."

HE SAID THE CIA CANNOT BE "DRAGGED INTO SOME MESS" WHERE IT INFRINGES ON AMERICANS' RIGHTS. IT CANNOT FOLLOW UP ON THE INTELLIGENCE IT PICKS UP IN NARCOTICS MATTERS, HE SAID.

BUSH PROMISED TO TELL THE COMMITTEE, IN A CLOSED SESSION, MUCH MORE ABOUT WHAT INTELLIGENCE IT HAS GATHERED ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND WHAT USE HAS BEEN MADE OF IT.

UPI 09-29 05:13 PED

NATIONWIDE COVERAGE

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